

SUPREME SACRIFICE OF YOUNG SOULS



The Martyrdom of the younger Sahibzadas

ੴ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹ ॥

SUPREME SACRIFICE OF YOUNG SOULS

It was my long cherished desire to depict the heroic deeds of the Sikhs in illustrated books. When I came across an illustrated biography of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji, I asked Dharam Parchar Committee to get the illustrated episode of martyrdom of younger Sahibzadas, Baba Zorawar Singh and Baba Fateh Singh prepared. Younger Sahibzadas were bricked alive but remained firm and steadfast in their faith. Even then, when the baits were thrown and afterwards threatened with dire consequences both bravely replied: "You are perhaps not aware of the glorious tradition of ours. In our great house it is the tradition to uphold faith amidst any catastrophe."

I am glad that Eighth edition of the 'Supreme Sacrifice of Young Souls' is being printed.

I wish that the accounts of brave martyrs, Sikh Generals and famous Sikhs be also serialized.

Humble Servant of Panth

Gurcharan Singh Tohra

(GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA)

President

Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar.

We are taking pleasure by publishing this revised edition of the book SUPREME SACRIFICE OF YOUNG SOULS by Dharam Parchar Committee (S.G.P.C.), Sri Amritsar. I hope this would be beneficial for the historical knowledge of the readers.

Guru Pa th Da Das,

Avtar Singh
(Avtar Singh)

President, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar

EXPERT ADVICE
DESIGN, TRANSLATION,
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
WRITER
ARTIST
ART WORK
PUBLISHER

SARDARINDERJIT SINGH
PRINCIPAL SATBIR SINGH (LATE)
PROF JAGDISH SINGH
S. DEVINDER SINGH
SHRI BODH RAJ
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The brave and fearless Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh were engaged for months together in a prolonged battle with the Moghul army outside the Fort of Anandpur

Emperor Aurangzeb sent a message on oath that if the Guru and his Sikhs left the fort they would be allowed to go wherever they please





Guru Gobind Singh had his doubts, but, on being persuaded by his devoted Sikhs, he reluctantly agreed to leave the Fort.

However it happened exactly as the Guru had apprehended. As soon as the Sikhs came out of the fort the Moghul Army pounced upon them. A fierce battle was fought on the banks of Sirsa River. The valiant

Sikhs faced the enemy with unparalleled courage. Each one of them killed quite a few Moghul soldiers before sacrificing himself.

In the dust and din of battle, members of the family of Guru Gobind Singh got separated from each other. The two younger sons Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh, proceeded along with Guruji's revered old mother Mata Gujri Ji. They passed through thick forests and difficult terrains. They came across wild animals, saw lions and snakes on the way but the brave Sahibzadas walked on and on fearlessly in the company of their grand mother, reciting the holy





psalms of their Gurus. The grand mother related to them stories from Sikh History. They were thus able to cover the journey comfortably.

4 The two elder brothers, Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh, accompanied their father

Guru Gobind Singh. After crossing Sirsa river, they stayed for the night at Ropar and reached the Chamkaur Fort early next morning.

After an arduous journey Mata Gujri Ji along with the two Sahibzadas, reached the hut of a Muslim water carrier, Kuma. On seeing Mataji he rushed out and, with folded hands, requested Mataji to bless his humble cottage by staying therein. Mataji was pleased with his devotion. Since it was getting dark, she decided to halt there for the night.





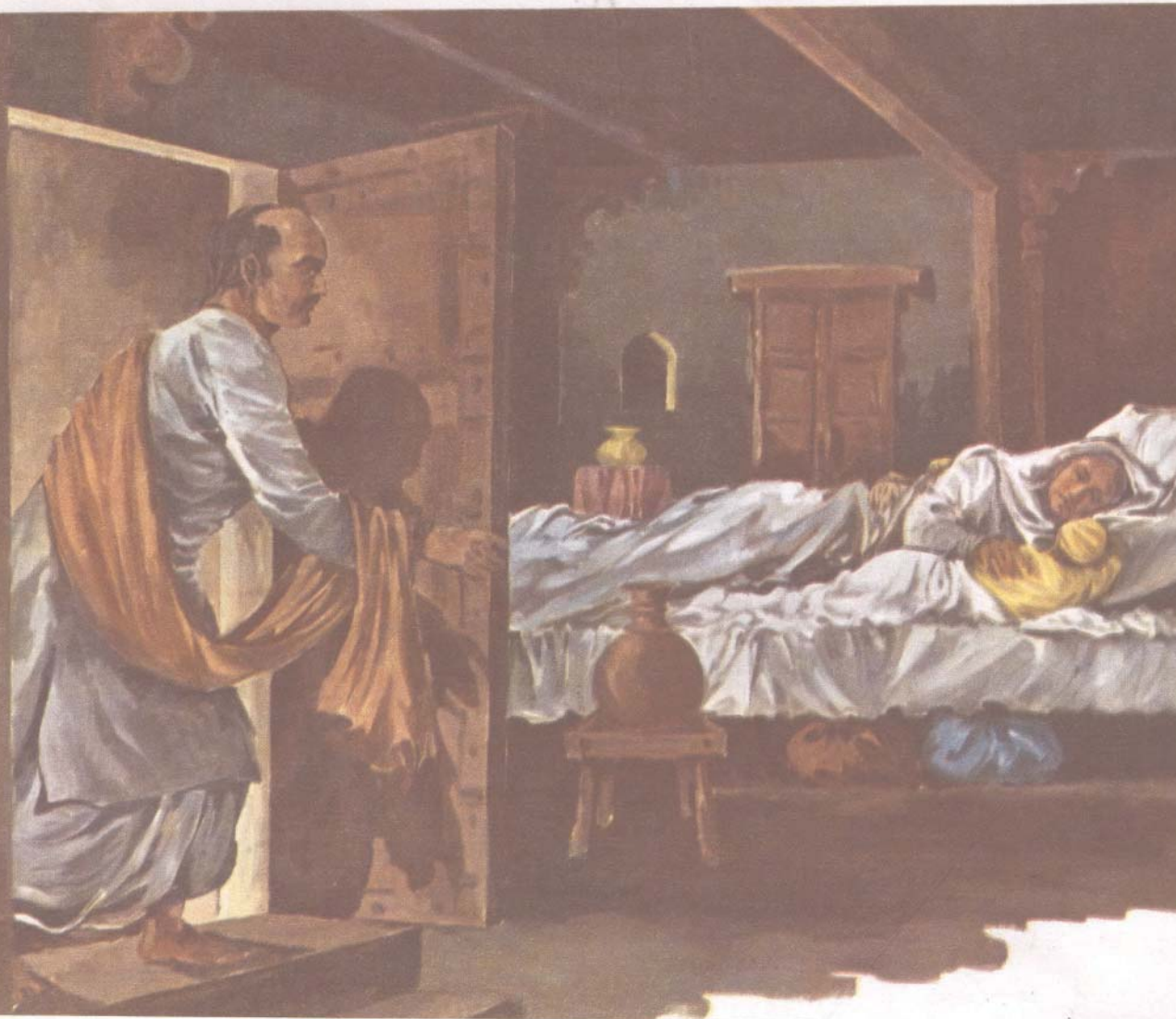
On getting clue, the old Guru's domestic ser̄vant, Gangu arrived the next morning. He requested Mataji' to go with him to his village. He assured her that their whereabouts will not be known to the Emperor's officials and they would be quite safe there.

Mataji was a little reluctant but on his persistent requests she agreed. After getting their luggage loaded on a pony, all of them set out for his village. The two Sahibzadas went walking along with their grand mother. Off and on, they would enquire about their father and the elder brothers, Sahibzadas Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh.

After trekking the whole day, they reached village Kheri in the evening. On arrival in Gangu's house Mataji put her bag and baggage in a corner of one of the rooms.

Sahibzadas Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh changed their clothes and set their beddings, recited the holy evening prayer and went to sleep in their grand-mother's embrace.

At midnight Gangu quietly stole into their room, looked at Mataji who was resting in her bed with her eyes shut. Presuming that she was fast asleep, he bent down, put his hands into the bag, removed the gold coins and slipped out of the room. Mataji heard the sound of footsteps but she just slept over it and continued resting as usual.





When she got up the next morning, she asked Gangu, "Our things are lying scattered about, I hope the outer door was closed. Where are the gold coins?" Gangu just looked blank.

Without uttering a word Gangu rushed out of the house and started shouting for

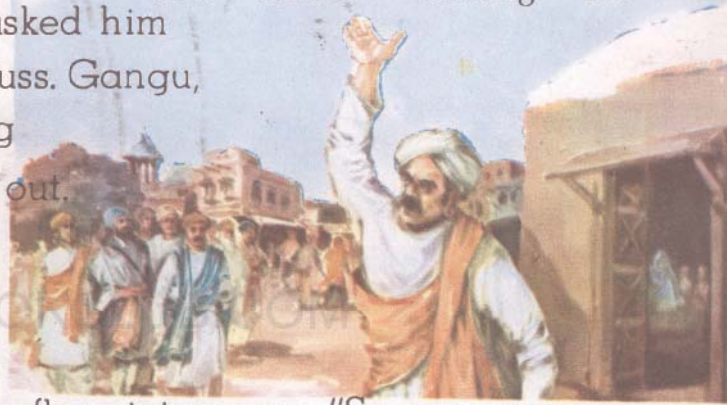
help to trace the thief.

Mataji called him in and asked him not to make unnecessary fuss. Gangu, however, persisted in saying that the thief must be found out.

Mataji tried to pacify him and asked him to keep the gold coins if he so

wished. At this Gangu flew into rage, "So you are suspecting me. How ungrateful of you. I have given you refuge and this is the reward I get."

Mata Gujri made every effort to persuade him to





see reason. Gangu, however, would not listen to any advice. He left his house and headed straight for the Police station at Morinda.

On arrival at Morinda, he went straight to the Kotwal. After paying his respects he told him that he desired to convey some confidential information. On an enquiry by the Kotwal, Gangu confided to him in a low voice that Guru Gobind Singh's mother and his two young sons were hiding in his house. The Kotwal was pleased to get this news. He called his constables and sent them along with Gangu to his house to arrest them.



When the constables reached Gangu's house, some neighbours peeped out. The constables ran to the back of the house and were surprised to see Mata Gujri Ji and the two Sahibzadas sitting unconcerned. They apprised them of the Kotwal's orders to arrest them. Mata Gujri Ji embraced the two Sahibzadas who were ready to go. Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh and Mata Gujri Ji accompanied the constables.

A small crowd had collected outside the house. Gangu was standing aside with downcast eyes. People were cursing him for his dishonesty and betrayal. A woman remarked "How treacherous! He brought them to his house and then went and informed the Kotwal". They were wondering why the young innocent boys and the respected old lady were being escorted to the Police Station. They were impressed by the divine looks and the graceful bearing of Mata Ji.





On arrival at the Kotwali Mata Gujri Ji and the two Sahibzadas were lodged in the Lockup for the night. Both the brothers listened to the tales of bravery of the followers of Guru Nanak, story of the unique Martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur from their dear and affectionate grand mother. All three joined in reciting the sacred evening Sikh prayer, *Rahras and Kirtan Sohila*—before going to bed.

Early next morning they were taken in a bullock cart to Bassi Police Station. News of their arrest had spread far and wide. Large crowds collected everywhere on the way. People were surprised that the young innocent boys had been put under arrest along with their venerable grand mother. The fearless looks of the Sahibzadas aroused their admiration and they observed, "They are the brave sons of their brave father". The remarks of the on-lookers made the constables panicky and they started walking fast. The cart-driver also whipped the bullocks so that they could reach Sirhind quickly.



On arrival at Sirhind, they were lodged for the night in a cold room in the tower. At a great risk to his life, one of the devotees of the Guru, Bhai Moti Ram managed to send milk for Mataji and the Sahibzadas. Sahibzadas Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh listened to episodes from Sikh History related to them by their grand-mother. On hearing about the ideals set by the Gurus the two Sahibzadas assured Mata Gujri Ji that they would stand by their faith and follow in the footsteps of their illustrious father. Mataji was pleased to hear this and admired her grand children's courage and firm determination.



Next morning the Police constables appeared again and told Mataji that they had orders for taking the two boys to the Nawab's Court. On an enquiry by Mataji as to why they were called there, they answered that they were not aware of the reasons, their duty was to obey orders only. Mataji embraced her grand-sons, blessed them and asked them to uphold the sacred traditions of the Gurus. The two Sahibzadas pledged to do so and departed cheerfully.





The two Sahibzadas walked to the court boldly along with the constables. As they reached the Court, they noticed that the big gate was closed and there was only a small window for gaining entry to the Court. The intelligent Sahibzadas saw through the game. They put their feet forward and jumped inside through the window without bowing their heads.

The Nawab's Court was in session. As the two Sahibzadas stepped inside, they greeted the courtiers with the Sikh salutation—

*Wahguru Ji Ka Khalsa "The Khalsa is God's own
Wahguru Ji Ki Fateh Victory be to God".*

The Court resounded with their greeting. All the courtiers were greatly impressed by their fearless behaviour.





Dressed in saffron shirts with Kirpans worn round their waists, the fair-coloured Sahibzadas looked very sweet and lovely. Nawab Wazir Khan addressed them in an affectionate tone :

"What sweet and brave faces ! Islam will be proud to have you within its fold. Just recite Kalma (Muslim benediction) and we shall welcome you in our midst. You will get any thing for the asking".

The two Sahibzadas shouted back in one voice. "We care not for the worldly wealth. We shall not renounce our religion at any cost". The Nawab got quite annoyed at their reply but just kept quiet.

Addressing the Qazi the Nawab said, "Have you observed the insolent behaviour of these boys! Don't regard them as innocent. They are the rebellious sons of a rebel. They will have to be punished."

The Qazi told the Nawab that, according to Islamic Law, the two boys were not guilty of any crime. They could not be held responsible for their father's actions.

The Nawab observed, however, "They are rebels too. Haven't you heard their rude statements?"

The Qazi answered, "But they have not committed any crime".

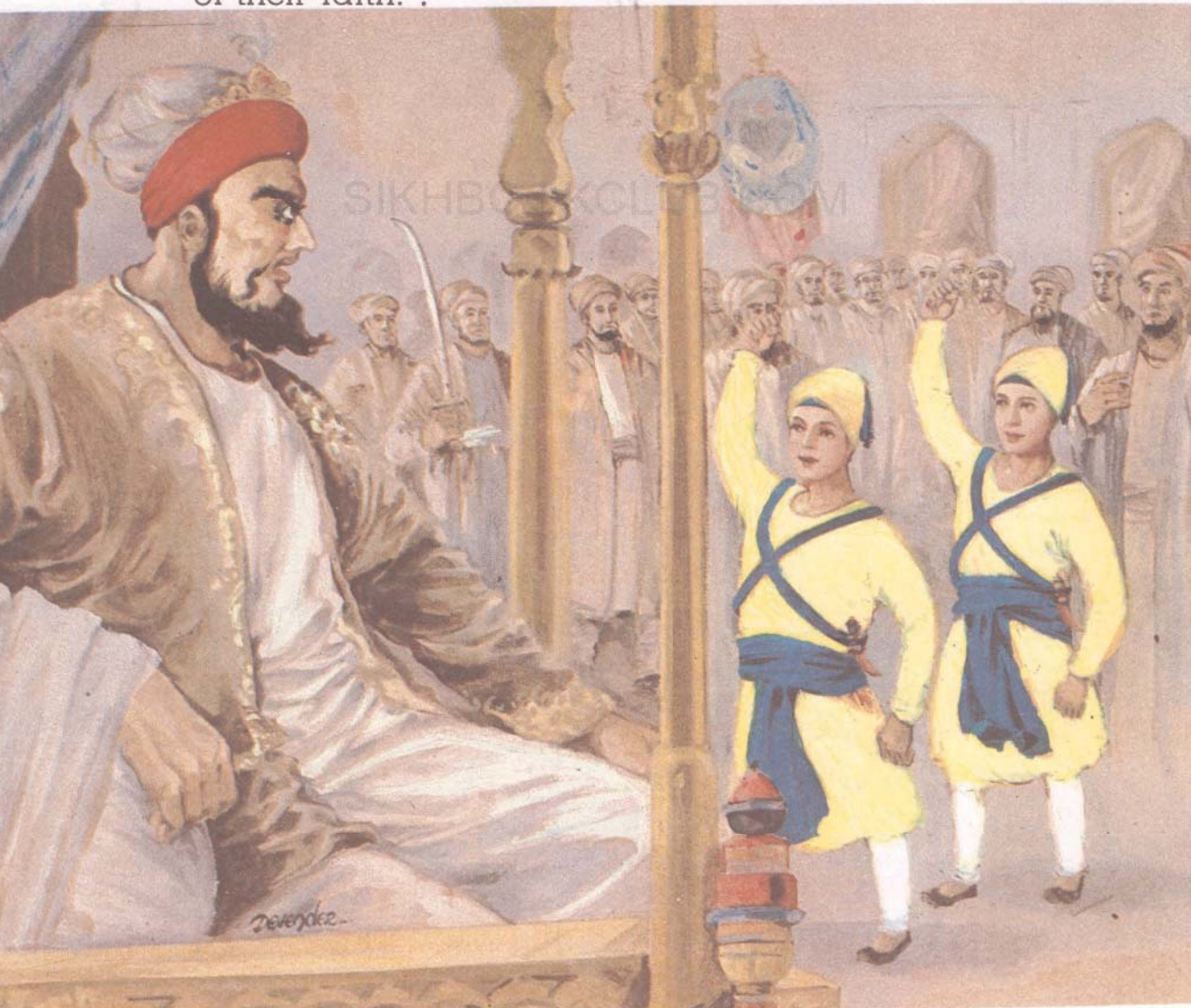
Nawab Wazir Khan was taken aback at the Qazi's unexpected reply.



Nawab Wazir Khan again tried to persuade them and said, "You are still young and innocent. It is your age for enjoyment and fun. If you listen to our advice, you will enjoy life to your heart's content in this world and be blessed with a glorious life in Paradise".

Sahibzada Zorawar Singh spoke fearlessly. "We are fighting against tyranny and injustice. We are the sons of Guru Gobind Singh, the grand sons of Guru Tegh Bahadur and descendants of Guru Arjun Dev. We shall follow in their footsteps. We are ready for all sacrifices for the protection of our faith".

In a low voice the Nawab observed, "How proud of their faith!".



One of the officials of the Moghul government Dewan Sucha Nand, who happened to be there, walked up to the Sahibzadas and asked them, "If you are released, where will you go?"

Sahibzada Zorawar Singh said, "We shall go to the forests, gather together a few Sikhs, get hold of good horses and then come and face you and your army on the battlefield."

On hearing this, Dewan Sucha Nand observed, "Do you know that your father has been slain?"

Both the brothers reacted in an angry tone, "No one can kill our respected father. He will never fall into your hands."





The two Sahibzadas shouted back, "We don't need any advice from you. Listen carefully. Until this tyrannical Government is completely wiped out, we shall go on fighting."

Dewan Sucha Nand was taken aback at their reply. Addressing the Nawab, he said, "Sir, killing the serpent and feeding his young ones would not be wise. When these young kids grow up, they will rebel against the Government. They must be punished and should, on no account, be released." The Nawab listened to what Dewan Sucha Nand said.

The two Sahibzadas were in a playful mood,



talking to each other fearlessly and quite unconcerned when the Nawab, the Qazi and Dewan Sucha Nand were engaged in this conversation. The courtiers were quite amazed at the lack of any fear or anxiety on their faces even though it was a question of life and death for them.

The Nawab said to the Qazi again, "You have heard the impertinent answers given by them to Dewan Sucha Nand. It would not be safe to release them. They are sure to raise the banner of revolt, like their father when they grow up."



The Qazi had also listened to the conversation that took place between Dewan Sucha Nand and the two bold sons of Guru Gobind Singh. After some deliberation he pronounced his judgement and ordered that they be bricked up alive in a wall. Sahibzadas heard the sentence without dismay but the courtiers were taken aback on hearing the judgement. The Qazi advised the Nawab further that they be handed over to the Nawab of Malerkotla for carrying out the sentence since his father met his end at the hands of the Guru so that he can have his revenge by getting his sons buried alive.



Nawab Wazir Khan called Sher Mohammad Khan, the Nawab of Malerkotla, and conveyed the Qazi's orders to him, "Your brother lost his life at the hands of Guru Gobind Singh. Here is an opportunity for you to wreak your vengeance. The Qazi has sentenced these two sons of Guru Gobind Singh to death and has further ordered that they be bricked up alive. We are handing them over to you for doing the needful."

On hearing this Sher Mohammad was dumb-founded. After some pause he said to the Nawab in a faltering voice, "This is cruelty! My brother was killed on the battlefield. These innocent boys are not responsible for his death. If we have to take revenge it shall be from the father. God save us from this sinful act."

Saying this he got up and remarked in a mournful tone, "O God, how cruel!"



Thereafter the Nawab ordered that both the boys be sent back to the tower. He directed his officials to arrange for executioners who would brick them alive in between two walls, which may be constructed immediately.

The Sahibzadas reached the tower and gave a report of the proceedings of the court to their grandmother. She embraced her grand sons, patted them on their backs for their courageous and bold stand and said, "You have rightly upheld the dignity and honour of your revered grand-father and your valiant father.

Next morning they were taken to the Nawab's court. The Nawab asked them again, "I do hope you have made up your mind to embrace Islam, otherwise, as you know, you will be bricked up alive."

Both the Sahibzadas proclaimed fearlessly, "We shall never give up our faith, whatever may be the consequences. Death has no meaning for us."

The Nawab was simply amazed at their determined and firm reply. One of his officials stepped forward, and said to the Nawab, "Sir, the two royal executioners of Delhi, Shasal Beg and Vashal Beg, are present in the court for hearing of their case. They are prepared to carry out your orders for bricking up these boys alive if they are granted pardon." The Nawab called them and told them, "Your request for pardon has been granted on condition that you brick up these two sons of Guru Gobind Singh alive in a wall."





“The constables took away both the Sahibzadas. A large crowd had collected outside. People were surprised on hearing of the orders of the Nawab that the two young innocent sons of Guru Gobind Singh were to be bricked alive.

“What crime have they committed?” said one.

“How cruel and inhuman, O God!” exclaimed another.

“But they are not terrified,” remarked a lady in the crowd.

“They are the brave sons of their brave father, Guru Gobind Singh,” pat came the remark by her companion.



The constables, who were escorting the two Sahibzadas, were getting perturbed on hearing such observations from the crowd and were rushing forward.

The Sahibzadas were brought to the spot where a wall was being raised. Both of them were made to stand side by side. The Qazi arrived there soon after and tried to persuade them to accept Islam and not to cut short their lives. Even the executioners tried to prevail upon them but they were both unflinching in their determination and told the executioners, "Raise the wall fast and bury the Moghul Raj quickly. Don't delay for a minute." Thereafter both of them started reciting Japji while the wall was going up brick by brick.



The wall went up higher and higher until it reached their chests. The Nawab and Qazi approached them and said to them in an affectionate tone, "There is still time for you to save your lives, just recite the Kalma and the wall will be pulled down immediately."

The Sahibzadas shouted loudly, "We shall not give up our faith, death does not frighten us."

Both the Nawab and Qazi were amazed at their steadfast determination. Tears flowed from the eyes of onlookers, as they observed, "Blessed be their mother who gave birth to such children."

The wall went up still higher and it was shoulder high. Sahibzada Zorawar Singh said to his younger brother, "They are putting us to test. They do not know that the Sikhs of Guru Nanak are fearless. Our Fifth Guru Arjun Dev faced martyrdom cheerfully on burning iron pans. Whereas he guided humanity to the path of a truthful and noble life, he also set an example of facing death boldly and with full faith in God."

The younger brother Sahibzada Fateh Singh remarked, "The martyrdom of our revered grand father, Guru Teg Bahadur was also unique. We shall soon join him. He is waiting for us."

Later both the Sahibzadas became unconscious.





The executioners became nervous and consulted each other. "They are now nearing their end. There is no need to raise the wall further. Why not cut short their agony by beheading them? It is already getting dark."

The wall was pulled down. They brought the unconscious Sahibzadas out laid them flat on the ground and, in an instant, martyred them.

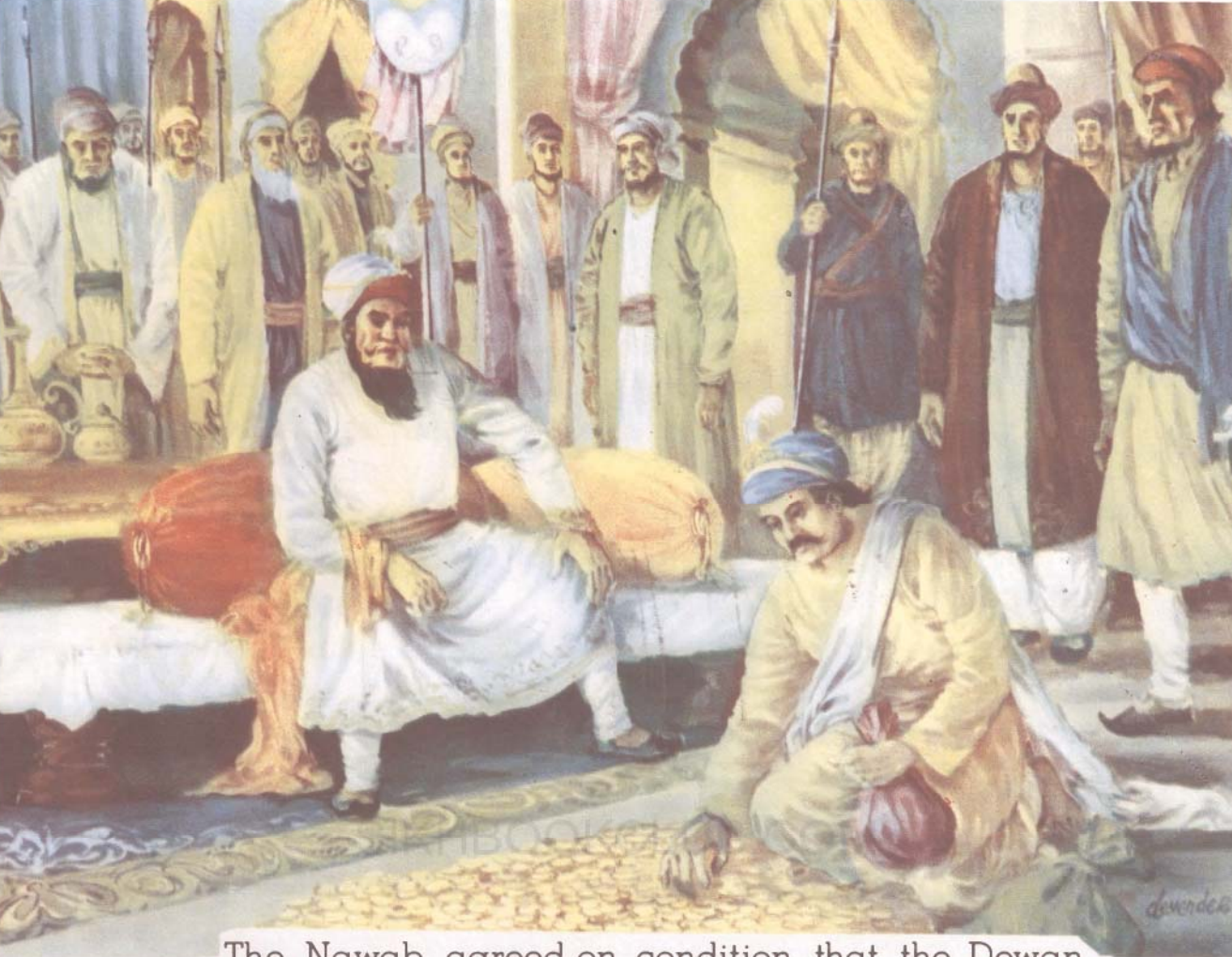
People in the crowd were shocked at this ghastly act. They sighed in dismay, "What cruelty ! How shall they answer for their crime in Mohammad's Court."

Mata Gujri Ji, who was sitting in meditation in the tower, breathed her last. The messenger who came with the news of the martyrdom of the Sahibzadas found that Mata-Ji had already attained salvation.

There was great commotion in the town of Sirhind. Every one was furious at the atrocious crime. They were unanimous in their view that this heinous act would herald the doomsday of the Moghul Empire. They admired the courage and steadfastness of the brave sons of Guru Gobind Singh and remarked, "What determination at this young age! They did not budge an inch from their position in spite of several allurements by the Nawab and Qazi."

The same evening Dewan Todar Mal, a jeweller reached Nawab Wazir Khan's court for permission to cremate the dead bodies of the two Sahibzadas & Mata Gujri.





The Nawab agreed on condition that the Dewan paid for the required piece of land by spreading as many gold coins as would cover the entire spot. The Dewan accepted the terms and brought bagfuls of gold coins. He marked the site and spread coins on the entire piece of land he selected for cremation.

The two martyred young sons of Guru Gobind Singh were cremated with full honours along with their grand mother. There is no parallel to the martyrdom of such young boys in the annals of human history. Sahibzada Fateh Singh was less than six years old (born 1699) and Sahibzada Zorawar Singh just over eight (born in 1696). They laid down their lives in December 1704. They were bricked up alive but did not bow before the tyranny of the Moghul government.

Guru Gobind Singh was at the time in the forests



of Machhiwara, when the news of the martyrdom of his younger sons reached him. On hearing this he pulled out a plant with the tip of his arrow and forecast that this tragedy will herald the uprooting of Moghul Empire in India. And to the Emperor he wrote: "It matters little if a jackal through cunning and treachery succeeds in killing lion's two cubs, for the lion himself lives to inflict retribution on you."

Guru Gobind Singh addressed his followers thus:
I have sacrificed four sons for the survival of the

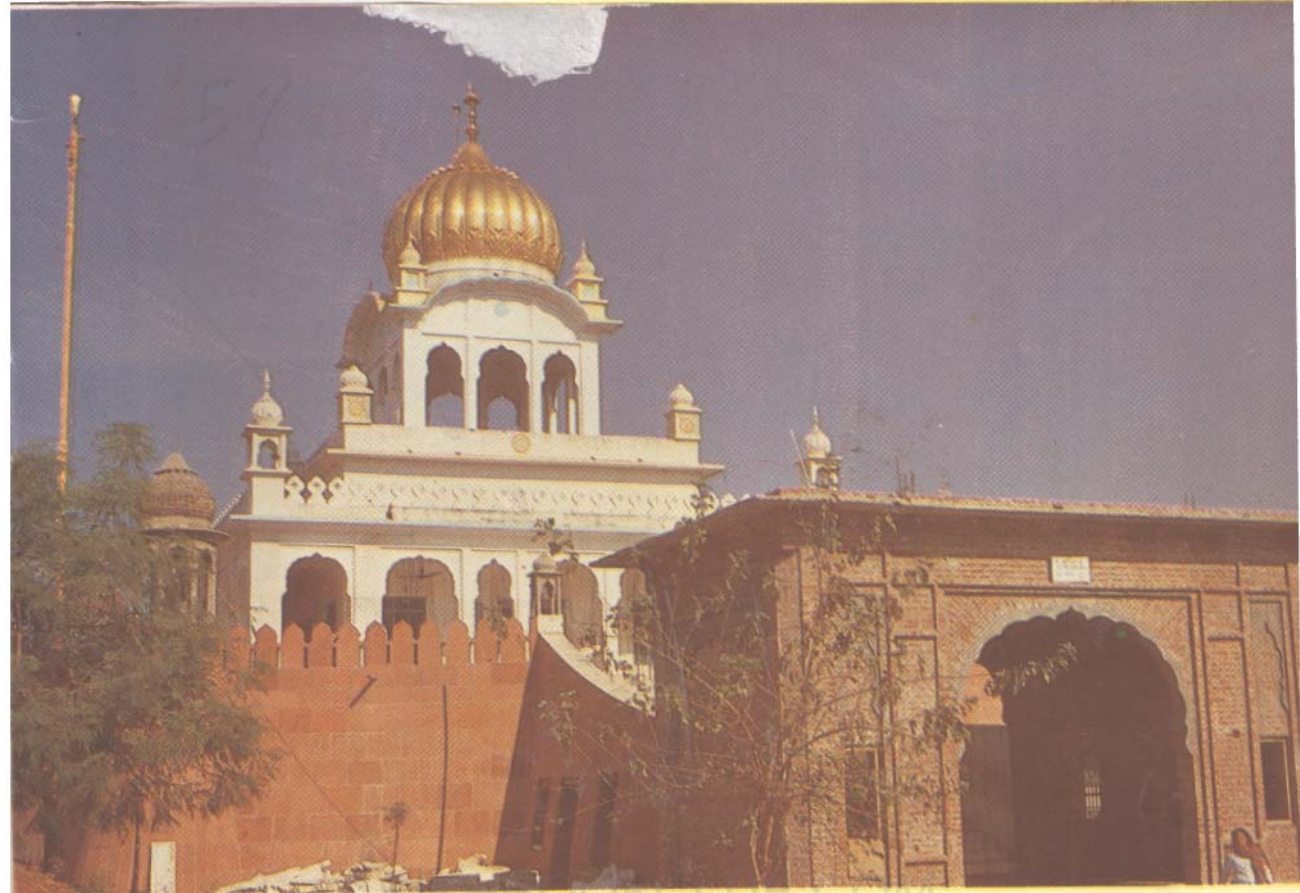


thousands of my sons who are still alive."

A wave of anguish gripped the country at the news of the martyrdom of the Sahibzadas. After some time the recluse Banda Bairagi came under the influence of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, took 'Amrit' and was transformed as Banda Singh Bahadur. He shook the Moghul Empire and the town of Sirhind was reduced to utter ruins.

The renowned Hindi Poet, Maithli Saran Gupta in his well known book Bharat Bharati said:

"Whatever their present position, the future of the community whose sons can thus lay down their lives for their faith, is bound to be glorious."



Gurdwara Burj Sahib
where Sahibjadas and
Mata ji were confined
before Martyrdom.

Gurdwara Jyoti Sahib
where Mata ji and
Sahibjadas were
cremated.